

Appl. No. : 10/719,344
Filed : November 21, 2003

IN THE CLAIMS:

1.-32. (Canceled)

33. (New)

A method of presenting wagering games to a player of a gaming machine comprising the machine implemented steps of:

- A) accepting a wager from said player;
- B) indicating a life count comprising a minimum of at least two life counts;
- C) presenting a wagering game comprising displaying one or more symbols to said player;
- D) determining an outcome of said game, wherein if said outcome is at least one predetermined winning outcome, awarding an award for said winning outcome;
- E) determining any adjustment to said life count comprising:
 - if a life count decreasing outcome is received, reducing said life count;
 - if a life count increasing outcome is received, increasing said life count; and
 - if neither a life count increasing or decreasing outcome is received, maintaining said life count; and
- F) repeating steps C-E until said life count is zero, whereby a player is permitted to play multiple independent wagering games based upon a single wager and wherein play of additional wagering games is only terminated when the life count reaches zero.

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34. (New)

The method in accordance with Claim 33 further comprising the step of totaling the number of independent wagering games played by said player before said life count reaches zero.

35. (New)

The method in accordance with Claim 34 further comprising the step of awarding a bonus award if said number reaches a predetermined minimum number.

36. (New)

The method in accordance with Claim 35 wherein said award comprises at least a portion of a progressive jackpot.

37. (New)

The method in accordance with Claim 33 wherein said life count cannot exceed a predetermined maximum count.

38. (New)

The method in accordance with Claim 33 wherein said life count increasing outcome comprises receipt of a game extension symbol.

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39. (New)

The method in accordance with Claim 33 wherein said life count decreasing outcome comprises receipt of a game termination symbol.

40. (New)

A method of presenting wagering games to a player of a gaming machine comprising the machine implemented steps of:

- A) accepting a wager from said player;
- B) indicating a life count comprising a minimum of at least two life counts;
- C) indicating a game count;
- D) presenting a wagering game comprising displaying one or more symbols to said player;
- E) incrementing said game count based upon said presented wagering game;
- F) determining an outcome of said game, wherein if said outcome is at least one predetermined winning outcome, awarding an award for said winning outcome;
- G) determining if said game count has reached a predetermined minimum number and, if so, awarding a bonus award;
- H) determining any adjustment to said life count comprising:
 - if a life count decreasing outcome is received, reducing said life count;
 - if a life count increasing outcome is received, increasing said life count; and

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if neither a life count increasing or decreasing outcome is received,
maintaining said life count; and

I) repeating steps D-H until said life count is zero, whereby a player is permitted to play multiple independent wagering games based upon a single wager and wherein play of additional wagering games is only terminated when the life count reaches zero.

41. (New)

The method in accordance with Claim 40 wherein said wagering game comprises a slot game in which a plurality of simulated or physical reels is spun and said player is permitted to spin said reels until said life count reaches zero.

42. (New)

The method in accordance with Claim 40 wherein the occurrence of a life count increasing outcome or a life count decreasing outcome is determined at least in part by data received from said player.

43. (New)

The method in accordance with Claim 40 wherein said life count increasing and decreasing outcomes comprise the occurrence of a life count increasing symbol or a life count decreasing symbol on one of said reels.

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44. (New)

A method of presenting wagering games to a player of a gaming machine comprising the machine implemented steps of:

- A) accepting a wager from said player;
- B) displaying a life indicator;
- C) beginning a period of game play in which a player may play at least two independent games based upon said single wager, said game play period ending when said life indicator reaches a predetermined level;
- D) presenting a wagering game comprising displaying one or more symbols to said player;
- E) determining an outcome of said game, wherein if said outcome is at least one predetermined winning outcome, awarding an award for said winning outcome;
- F) determining any adjustment to said life indicator based upon the occurrence of any life indicator increasing or decreasing symbol; and
- G) repeating steps C-F until said life indicator reaches said predetermined level.

45. (New)

The method in accordance with Claim 44 wherein said life indicator comprises a simulation of a sports event.

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46. (New)

The method in accordance with Claim 45 wherein said sports event comprises baseball and said life indicator comprises one or more strikes, wherein said predetermined level comprises three strikes.

47. (New)

The method in accordance with Claim 44 wherein said wagering game comprises a slot game having a plurality of reels and wherein said life indicator increasing or decreasing symbols may only appear on one of said plurality of reels.

48. (New)

The method in accordance with Claim 44 wherein said step of displaying a life indicator comprises displaying a life count of at least two, wherein life indicator increasing symbols increase said life count and life indicator decreasing symbols decrease said life count and wherein said predetermined threshold comprises zero.

49. (New)

The method in accordance with Claim 44 wherein said step of displaying a life indicator comprises displaying a life count of zero, wherein life indicator decreasing symbols increase said life count and wherein said life indicator increasing symbols decrease said life count and wherein

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said predetermined threshold comprises at least three.

50. (New)

The method in accordance with Claim 44 wherein said life decreasing symbols comprise bombs and said life increasing symbols comprise ships.

51. (New)

A method of presenting wagering games to a player of a gaming machine comprising the machine implemented steps of:

- A) accepting a wager from said player;
- B) displaying a simulated event having an initial status;
- C) beginning a period of game play in which a player may play at least two independent wagering games based upon said single wager, said game play period ending when said simulated event reaches a predetermined outcome based upon changes to said status thereof resulting from outcomes of said wagering games;
- D) presenting a wagering game comprising displaying one or more symbols to said player;
- E) determining an outcome of said game, wherein if said outcome is at least one predetermined winning outcome, awarding an award for said winning outcome;
- F) modifying said status of said simulated event based upon the occurrence of any

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simulated event changing result in said outcome of said game; and

G) repeating steps C-F until said status of said simulated event reaches said predetermined outcome based upon the aggregation of simulated event changing results achieved during the play of said at least two independent games.

52. (New)

The method in accordance with Claim 51 wherein said simulated event comprises a game of football having a football position and wherein said simulated event increasing symbols move said football in a forward direction and said simulated event decreasing symbols move said football in a backward direction.

53. (New)

The method in accordance with Claim 51 wherein said simulated event comprises a game of baseball, said baseball game having an initial status of a number of strikes, wherein said simulated event changing result comprises a strike and wherein said predetermined outcome comprises receiving at least three strikes.

54. (New)

The method in accordance with Claim 51 wherein said simulated event changing result comprises a game termination symbol or a game extension symbol.